

Published: Oct. 24, 2014, *Kokomo Tribune* [Page: A4]

http://www.kokomotribune.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-smoothing-the-transition/article_35ad697c-5add-11e4-99a8-4369e59f430c.html

Re-published: 2015-07-30, *Kokomo Tribune* [Page: A4]

http://www.kokomotribune.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-smoothing-the-transition/article_a4522022-3636-11e5-bd8c-4fb0abe63e99.html

Editorial: Smoothing the transition

As we reported in our front page story Wednesday, three Indiana University campuses — IU Kokomo, IU South Bend and IU Northwest — are sharing a three-year, \$450,000 grant to provide academic support and financial incentives for Ivy Tech students to transfer to IU to complete a four-year degree. Major kudos should be awarded to the Kresge Foundation — a \$3 billion private, national foundation — which made the program possible through its generous donation.

Students who wish to participate in this necessary program will have to complete some basic steps before they can benefit. Participating students will be required to attend college full time, maintain good academic standing, meet regularly with college and university advisers and finish both the associate and bachelor degrees in no more than nine semesters.

For those who jump through those hoops, though, the rewards will be immediate. The program provides students with academic support and financial incentives, including: guaranteed admission, university advising

and mentoring while attending Ivy Tech, scholarships that offset tuition increases and advice to help students minimize college debt.

As everyone who has entered the workforce in the past few decades already knows, obtaining a college degree is all but essential. The financial implications for future potential earnings are irrefutable. According to a 2011 Georgetown University study, people with a bachelor's degree make 84 percent more over a lifetime than high school graduates. Students who are able to graduate with such a degree will see it pay dividends for years to come. Finding ways to ensure these willing Ivy Tech students have every opportunity to obtain a higher education at these three IU campuses should be a top priority.